

Sidereal Times

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS ASSOCIATION OF PRINCETON, INC.

Director: Roxanne Peery

Editor: Richard Peery

- Cancelled*
- Tuesday, January 13 *Dick Peery, "BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE NEW JERSEY STATE MUSEUM PLANETARIUM"*
Planetarium show beginning at 8:00 p.m. See map on next page for directions.
- Tuesday, February 10 *Dr. Scott Tremaine, Institute for Advanced Study, "PLANETARY RINGS"*. Dr. Tremaine is one of the original discoverers of the rings of Uranus. This should be a really interesting talk.
- Tuesday, March 10 *Dr. Andy Britten, an eye specialist, will tell us how and why the eye works in his talk "THE EYE AS A SENSOR"*.
- Tuesday, April 14 *Ed Greaney, New Jersey Amateur Astronomers (NJAA) will tell us a little about NJAA and their observatory which houses a 26" Newtonian. Dave Brown will round out the program with his short talk on the amateur astronomer's library.*

All meetings except the January planetarium show will be held at the Institute for Advanced Study on Olden Lane in Princeton, and begin promptly at 8:00 p.m.

A pre-meeting dinner will be held for the speaker which members and their guests are invited to. Dinner begins at 5:45 p.m. (usually in the bar). The January dinner will be held at *Ray Agabiti's* in Morrisville (shown on map). All other dinners will be held at the *Foolish Fox* at the junction of Route 206 and 518 in Rocky Hill. The last two months we ate at *Good Time Charley's* and found that although their food was good (especially dessert) it was also expensive.

DECEMBER MEETING

Dave Crisp, Princeton U Grad Student and new AAAP member spoke to the club about the McMath Solar Telescope at Kitt Peak which has been in operation since 1962. He discussed some of the design factors that had to be considered when building a solar telescope. Excessive heat and light are the number one problem. It turns out that a temperature gradient of considerably less than one degree over the 80" (8" thick) f/60 primary is enough to distort the image. Complex cooling systems therefore were only one of the many unusual features designed right into the installation.

BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be January 5th at the home of Roxanne Peery at 8:00 p.m. Any AAAP member can attend the Board meetings, but only Board members may vote. Fund raising, the observatory and Astronomy Day 81 will be a few of the topics on the agenda.

SWARTHMORE TRIP

The January meeting is the last time you can register for the January 24 trip to Swarthmore Observatory. We will be forming a club expedition to visit the observatory (possibly peak through the scope) and meet with some of the staff. We will eat dinner in the college cafeteria at a cost of a few dollars per person. Please call Roxanne Peery at 397-3140 or Dave Brown at 466-2696 to register for the trip. Dave asks that you be pretty firm in your commitment as he needs to give the Swarthmore people an exact count.

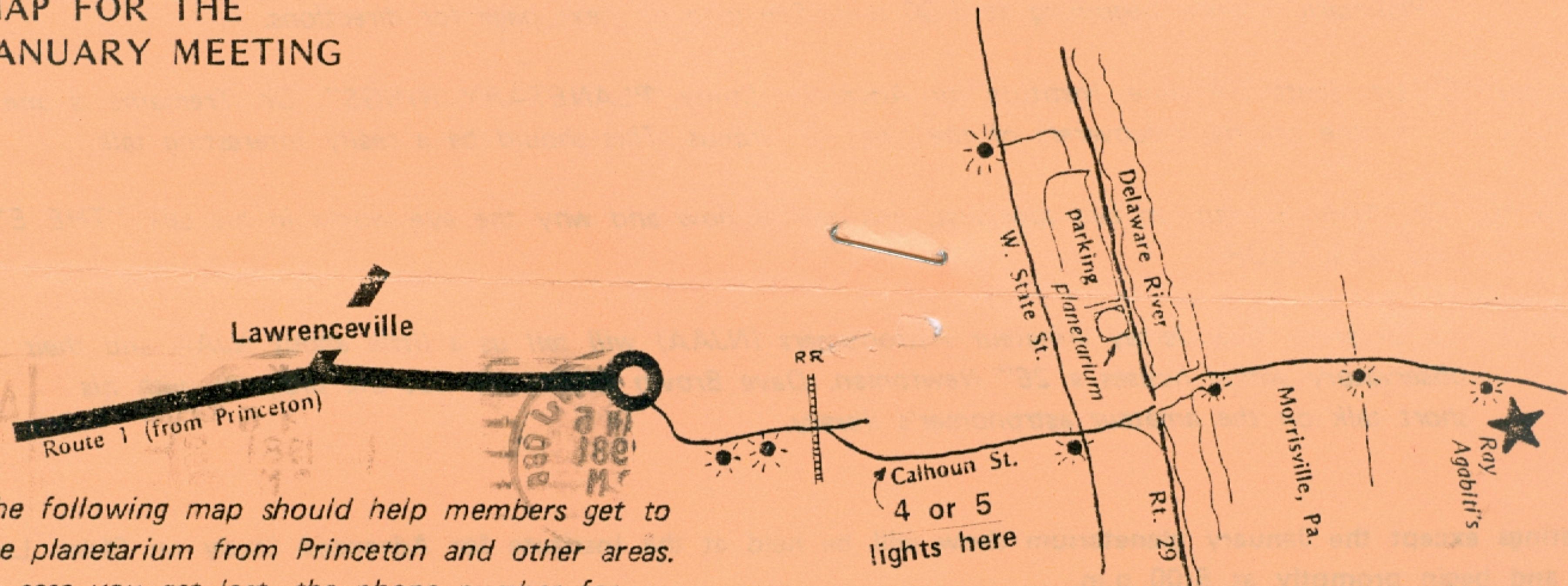
TIDBITS

Jason Albert was wondering if any AAAP members happened to catch the recent passing of Comet Stefan-Oterma past the Crab Nebula (M 1), on December 5th. If you happened to photograph or observe the event he would be interested in comparing observations.

A rare triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn will take place over the course of the next 8 months. Starting on December 31 the two planets will make 3 close approaches to each other. On the 31st the planets will be 63' apart, 63'' apart again on March 4th and 66'' apart on July 23rd. This is an event that should be of interest to many observers and the next one won't occur for a long long time. In fact the next conjunction, a single event will take place on Dec. 21, 2020. The next triple event occurs around 2288-89!

Sunday, January 18 is *SUPER SCIENCE SUNDAY* at the New Jersey State Museum. Included in the events will be the grand opening of the Hall of Natural Sciences, planetarium shows (including shows with no age restriction), chemical magic shows and refreshments. The museum is open from 1-5 p.m. and there is no admission fee.

MAP FOR THE JANUARY MEETING



The following map should help members get to the planetarium from Princeton and other areas. In case you get lost, the phone number for Agabiti's is 215- 736-2565, and the Planetarium number is 292-6333. If the map is of no use (if you are coming from a different direction) please call Roxanne Peery at 397-3140 for help. There is no scale to the map!

ASTRO- SURVEY: WE'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!

Please fill out the following survey so the Board can get a better idea of what activities to schedule for club members. Bring your completed form to the next club meeting or send to the AAAP post office box (2017) in Princeton (zip 08540). Thank you.

1. Name: _____
2. Occupation: _____
3. How long have you been an amateur? _____
4. Please list your astronomical equipment.

5. What star atlas do you use? _____
6. Please indicate how often you observe. _____
7. What is your primary observing interest?

8. Do you use the observatory? _____
9. Often? _____
10. Why/why not? (be specific)

11. What AAAP group activities would you be interested in?

12. How can the AAAP be improved to serve you better?

